

## Message Text

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ACTION AID-59

INFO OCT-01 AF-10 EUR-12 NEA-11 IO-13 ISO-00 SS-15  
SP-02 L-03 EB-08 CIAE-00 INR-10 NSAE-00 HA-05  
DODE-00 COME-00 OMB-01 TRSE-00 NSCE-00 SSO-00  
INRE-00 ICAE-00 HEW-04 /154 W  
-----004104 171912Z /45 53

O 170830Z MAY 78  
FM AMEMBASSY NOUAKCHOTT  
TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 9533  
INFO AMEMBASSY ABIDJAN  
AMEMBASSY ALGIERS  
AMEMBASSY DAKAR  
AMEMBASSY MADRID  
AMEMBASSY PARIS  
AMEMBASSY RABAT  
AMEMBASSY ROME  
USMISSION USUN NY  
USMISSION GENEVA  
USCINCEUR VAIHINGEN GERMANY

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CORRECTED COPY (TEXT)

FOR AF - DICK MOOSE AND AID/AA/AFR-GOLER BUTCHER FROM THE AMBASSADOR

CINCEUR FOR POLAD

E.O. 11652: GDS  
TAGS: EAID PEPR MR US  
SUBJ: MAURITANIAN WATER EMERGENCY

RWSRMTK. STATE 123555(NOTAL) B. NOUAKCHOTT 1315 (NOTAL)

1. IN THE PAST SEVERAL DAYS, IT HAS BEEN BROUGHT HOME TO US THAT  
AID/WASHINGTON SEEMS UNLIKELY TO CONSIDER FURTHER EMERGENCY AID  
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TO MAURITANIA UNTIL SUCH TIME AS OTHER DONORS, WHOSE ABILITY  
TO RESPOND QUICKLY TO FAST-BREAKING SITUATIONS IS LESS THAN OUR  
OWN HAVE "DONE THEIR BIT." AT THE RISK OF BEING TIRESOME, WE  
MAKE THE FOLLOWING APPEAL FOR AID IN WASHINGTON TO OVERCOME THIS  
RELUCTANCE AND GRANT THE \$300,000 WHICH THE MAURITANIAN GOV-  
ERNMENT HAS REQUESTED TO BRING WATER TO CATTLE BEING REPATRIA-  
TED FROM SENEGAL. IN RECENT MESSAGES, WE HAVE DONE OUR LEVEL

BEST TO ANSWER AIR/WASHINGTON'S TECHNICAL QUESTIONS ABOUT THE  
FEASIBILITY OF THIS UNDERTAKING. WE HOPE WE HAVE SUCCEEDED.  
IN ANY CASE, WE FEEL THE TIME HAS COME TO COMPLEMENT OUR  
TECHNICAL ANSWERS WITH A BROADER-GUAGE STATEMENT.

2. FIRST OF ALL, THE REPATRIATION OF MAURITANIAN LIVESTOCK  
FROM SENEGAL HAS CONFRONTED THIS GOVERNMENT WITH AN ECONOMIC  
AND POLITICAL CRISIS OF FORMIDABLE PROPORTIONS. DESPITE THE  
SUCCESSFUL APPEAL OF THE MAURITANIAN RURAL DEVELOPMENT  
MINISTER TO THE SENEGALESE AUTHORITIES TO ALLOW A SUBSTANTIAL  
PROPORTION OF THE MAURITANIAN HERDS TO REMAIN IN SENEGAL, THIS  
COUNTRY STANDS TO LOSE A LARGE NUMBER OF ANIMALS, I.E. ITS MAJOR  
INVESTMENT, IF IT FINDS ITSELF UNABLE TO FEED AND WATER THE RE-  
TURNING CATTLE. THE RAMIFICATIONS OF SUCH A DISASTER NEED  
NO ELABORATION.

3. UNTIL NOW, WE AND THE FED HAVE BEEN THE ONLY DONORS DAVVY  
ENOUGH TO RECOGNIZE THE SERIOUSNESS OF THE PROBLEM AND TO  
MOVE QUICKLY TO HELP. TO ASK THAT OTHER DONORS, WHOSE BUREAUCRACIES  
WILL FEEL COMPELLED TO STUDY THE SITUATION AT LENGTH, CONTRI-  
BUTE FIRST WILL BE TO SCUTTLE THE PROGRAM ENTIRELY.

4. IN SHORT, MAURITANIA FACES A MAJOR HUMAN PROBLEM. THAT  
THIS PROBLEM HAS MADE ITS APPEARANCE SUDDENLY, AND THAT  
DONORS OTHER THAN OURSELVES AND THE FED ARE UNPREPARED TO  
RESPOND TO IT QUICKLY, WILL NOT MAKE IT GO AWAY. IT DEMANDS  
ATTENTION FORM THOSE ABLE TO HELP DEAL WITH IT.  
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5. LEAVING ASIDE HUMANITARIAN CONSIDERATIONS, AND RECOGNIZING  
THE WEAKNESS OF POLITICAL ARGUMENTS FOR SUPPORTING A COUNTRY  
AS SIGNIFICANT  
AS MAURITANIA, WE NEVERTHELESS FEEL THAT THERE  
IS SOMETHING TO BE SAID FOR COMING TO THE AID OF A FRIEND.  
THE MAURITANIAN GOVERNMENT IS CURRENTLY ENGAGED IN A MILITARY  
STRUGGLE FOR ITS SURVIVAL. WHILE OUR RETICENCE PUZZLES THE  
MAURITANIANS, THEY RECOGNIZE THAT WE WILL DO NOTHING DIRECT  
TO HELP THEM IN THEIR WAR WITH THE POLISARIO AND HAVE  
NONETHELESS SUPPORTED US ON INTERNATIONAL POLITICAL QUESTIONS,  
EVEN WHEN GIVING SUCH SUPPORT HAS BEEN EMBARRASSING TO THEM  
IN THIRD WORLD COUNCILS. AT THE SAME TIME, THEY HAVE BEEN  
GRATEFUL FOR OUR GENEROSITY AND PROMPTNESS IN WORKING WITH  
THEM TO HELP SOLVE THEIR ECONOMIC PROBLEMS.

6. THIS TRADEOFF OF OUR ACTIVE WILLINGNESS TO HELP THEM  
SOLVE ECONOMIC PROBLEMS AGAINST THEIR POLITICAL SUPPORT  
IS THE BASE ON WHICH THE U.S.-MAURITANIAN RELATIONSHIP  
HAS BEEN BUILT. IT IS A RELATIONSHIP THAT HAS BEEN HIGHLY  
SATISFACTORY FROM OUR POINT OF VIEW. IT IS ALSO A RELATIONSHIP  
WHICH HAS PERMITTED THE MODERATE, WESTERN-ORIENTED ELEMENTS IS

THIS COUNTRY TO COME TO THE FORE.

7. WE DO NOT ARGUE THAT FAILURE TO RESPOND TO MAURITANIA'S CURRENT NEED FOR EMERGENCY WATER ASSISTANCE WILL UNDERMINE OUR RELATIONSHIP WITH THIS GOVERNMENT. WE DO THINK, HOWEVER, THAT SUCH A FAILURE WILL PROVOKE FURTHER QUESTIONING OF OUR ATTITUDE AND WILL STRENGTHEN THE HAND OF THOSE WHO OPPOSE THE MAURITANIAN LEADERSHIP ACROSS THE BOARD. IN OTHER JODS, IT WILL GIVE THE LEADERSHIP HERE ONE MORE ECONOMIC AND POLITICAL HEADACHE THAT IT DOES NOT NEED AT THIS TIME. FRANKLY, WE THINK IT WORTH \$300,000 TO SPARE THE MAURITANIAN GOVERNMENT THIS PAIN. KRYZA

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## Message Attributes

**Automatic Decaptioning:** X  
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**Channel Indicators:** n/a  
**Current Classification:** UNCLASSIFIED  
**Concepts:** WATER, DISASTER RELIEF, CATTLE  
**Control Number:** n/a  
**Copy:** SINGLE  
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**Decaption Date:** 01 jan 1960  
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**Disposition Case Number:** n/a  
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**Disposition Date:** 20 Mar 2014  
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**Disposition History:** n/a  
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**Disposition Remarks:**  
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**Review Exemptions:** n/a  
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**Review Release Date:** n/a  
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**Subject:** MAURITANIAN WATER EMERGENCY RWSRMTK. STATE 123555(NOTAL) B. NOUAKCHOTT 1315 (NOTAL)  
**TAGS:** PEPR, EAID, MR, US  
**To:** STATE  
**Type:** TE  
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